

BITS FROM THE BELFRY

Elm Street Congregational Church

P.O. Box 878 Bucksport, ME 04416 469-3333

ElmStCh@gmail.com

www.elmstreetcc.org



September-November 2011

Bells bring healing and action



Many of us have been unfortunate enough to experience a relationship that is unhealthy and spirals beyond our control. These relationships are painful and hard to get out of. Approximately one out of every four American women are estimated to have had an unhealthy relationship at some point (1). At least fifteen percent of annual domestic violence victims are also men (2). The prevalence of unhealthy relationships statistically applies to American relationships whether the partners are heterosexual or GLBT(3).

Elements of these relationships which remove our control include tactics by our partner like name calling, abuse of children and pets, isolation, economic control and physical abuse.

Most of us have heard this information at some point and acknowledge that unhealthy relationships are very scary and difficult for the people actually experiencing them. What we have been forced to acknowledge due to recent domestic violence tragedies in Maine is that unhealthy relationships also take a toll on the people around the couple; friends, family, coworkers, and even strangers.

When someone we know is hurt by their partner it makes an impact on all of us. We may feel guilt, frustration, anger, or helplessness and second guess our own relationships as well as every interaction we have ever had with the couple we are concerned about. And in Maine over the past few months we have experienced the absolute worst case scenario—the deaths of women, men, and children that we have called neighbors, teachers, coworkers, and friends.

On Wednesday, August 31 at 12 p.m., bells rang in our communities to express this frustration and loss. They also rallied us to a future where we seek to learn from our collective losses.

The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence (MCEDV) and its member organizations around the state partnered with churches and community members to take both symbolic and literal action against the disempowerment and silence so key to relational abuse. At noon on the 31st church bells rang – one minute to mourn our loss and one minute to call us to action.

“The bell ringing is a symbol of healing and action. People need to remember, and they also are looking for ways to make positive change in their own communities,” stated Margo Batsie, Member Services Coordinator at MCEDV, “We are encouraging people to reach out for help if they or someone they care about is in an abusive relationship. There are trained advocates ready to answer the call 24/7 across Maine.”

One church that participated in the bell ringing was the **Elm Street Congregational church in Bucksport, Maine**. Congregation members joined with staff from The Next Step Domestic Violence Project and Reverend Linda Smith to honor the meaning of the two minutes.

Reverend Smith read a retelling of the story of The Good Samaritan that applies to the situation of battered women. There was a moment of prayer and contemplation. People in attendance also discussed possible ways to honor the bell ringing symbolism of moving forward and acting to end domestic violence. Their ideas included:

- Making sure that schools have age appropriate education about power and control in relationships starting with bullying and leading up into controlling dating relationships.
- Encouraging the faith community to continue serving as a resource and role model for educational programming and a cultural awareness that unhealthy relationships harm us all.
- On an individual level, making the daily commitment to ask those we are concerned about if they need help and to stop laughing jokes that minimize violence.

These residents of Bucksport certainly took the bell ringing to heart and serve as an inspiration to us all as we seek to make a healthier and safer Maine in the months and years to come.

Statewide helpline: 1-866-834-HELP

Next Step 24 hour hotline: 1-800-315-5579

- (1) (The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute of Justice, Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence, July 2000. The Commonwealth Fund, Health Concerns Across a Woman's Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Women's Health, 1999)
- (2) (Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001, February 2003)
- (3) (Barnes, It's Just a Quarrel', American Bar Association Journal, February 1998, p. 25.)



Submitted By,
Leslie Linder

The Next Step DV Project of Hancock & Washington Counties
667-0176

llinder@nextstepdvproject.org

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Dear Friends,

Here it is September already and I ask myself, "Where has the summer gone?" The days are now getting a bit shorter, the air is crisp and getting cooler, and I have even seen a few leaves beginning to change. As a kid I can remember always wanting time to go by quickly. I would say, "If only I were older I could wear make-up? If only I were 16 I could get my learner's permit. If only time would go faster." Now that I am 63 (Bah Humbug!) I wish time would slow down a bit. It seems like Dick and I just left for China Lake for rest and rejuvenation and now I have been back for over two months.

I did have a lovely time away and it gave me an opportunity to decompress, to sit, read, knit, walk the dogs, talk to Dick, enjoy the lake, watch the eagles fly by and the loons float by, and it gave me time to pray, to reflect, and to feel close to God. Believe me when I say it is easy to feel close to God when you're sitting on a beautiful sandy beach watching the waves lap the shore, and listening to the sounds of nature. It was heaven.

I was away for four weeks to recharge my batteries but I also spent a good deal of time thinking about and praying about our life together as the Elm Street Church. I left soon after a small group of us finished our visioning process and I felt excited that we began to craft a direction for our church. I know that there are some that feel that spending time visioning for the future is unnecessary, but please believe me when I say to all of you, visioning for the future is one of the most important things any church can do. In a changing world, we, as the church, must change with it, and we need to decide how we can make the church relevant in our community today.

I firmly believe that our future lies in **your** hands. **You** are the body of Christ, **you** are the voice of the church, and only **you** can determine where we are headed. Each one of you has a voice and it is important that you are willing to share your ideas for how we move forward. What you need to understand though is that ideas without people willing to make that idea a reality are useless. How do you see our church serving this community? What unique ministries do you want to offer that would make people looking for a church home say, "I want to go to Elm Street because they are making a difference." How do you see us living out the Good News of Jesus Christ?" Are you willing to start a small group ministry here at our church and to run with the ball, so to speak? What gift can you offer to give our church her future? Friends, we can give lip service to ideas, or we can make them a real reality. It is up to you. Our church is getting smaller. Sadly I just recently buried another one of our long standing members, Betty Harrison. How do you propose that we bring in new people and what are you going to do to help make that happen? In today's busy world people who are looking for a church home want to feel that they can participate in ministries that reach out to serve their community: they want to make a difference and unless we have something to offer them they will find their spirituality elsewhere.

I am challenging each one of you to become actively involved in our future. No one is too old, too young, too tired, or too busy, to do Christ's work in this world. Not if we call ourselves Christians. Christ commanded each and every one of us to "Go out and make disciples" and Christ did not mean make disciples within the walls of the church. He meant to go out into the world, to reach out to **all** people and to invite them into the fellowship and life of the church.

I have said this before and I will continue to say it: A church without a vision and a commitment to make that vision a reality will cease to exist. What is our vision and how are we going to make it a reality? The challenge is to each one of us, young and old. We can either begin now to create our future, or we can sit back, do nothing, and watch our beloved church cease to exist. The choice is ours. What say you all??

With love and God's grace,

Linda

Rev. Linda A. Smith, Minister



With Sympathy

To Evelyn Provost and family on the loss of their loved one, William "Bill" Bennett.

To the Harrison family on the loss of their loved one, Elizabeth "Betty" Harrison.

Prayer List

Janet Minnis	Becky Neddeau
Greta, Ken, Katy	Michele Hosford
Ed Kirchmeier	Jim Christianson
Military Personnel & their loved ones	

September

9 Irene Atwood	21 Beverly Robshaw
13 Cathy Hamburger	24 Margaret Lowell
Welman McFarland	27 John Jackson
18 Leland Lowell	Don Mattson



October

4 Zack Laverdiere	20 Ralph Jewett
5 Nancy Etter	Joyce Sanborn
Roger Lenor	21 Ellie Martin
6 Janice Belcher	22 Marina Keene*
7 Evelyn Liebow	24 Julia Mann
10 Keith Neddeau	31 Charles Kirby

November



- 1 Amaya Hughes*
- 2 Joanne Jackson
- 3 Dean Mayhew
- 8 Joyce Andrews
- 29 MaryAnn Mayhew

Happy Anniversary



September

- 9 Arthur and Ann Adams
- 10 Peter and Vicky Wardwell
- 13 Daniel & Mary Hamm
- 14 David & Karen Harrison
- 15 John & Joanne Jackson
- 20 Benjamin & Jeannette Blodgett
- 24 Keith & Marilyn Neddeau
- 29 Lawrence & Barbara Bridgham

October

No anniversaries in October

November

- 11 Paul & Evelyn Liebow
- 24 Ed & Janice Belcher

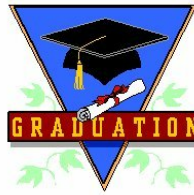


It is with great pleasure to announce that MaryAnn Boucher joined the Elm Street Congregational Church family on Sunday, August 30 during a special service that Rev. Smith led. Congratulations and welcome MaryAnn!



The 26th annual trombone concert was held on Saturday, August 6 in the sanctuary. Trombonists from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and even Canada performed various musical selections under the direction of conductor Jim Trembley. The audience enjoyed an evening of beautiful music. Donations were given to help maintain the E. & G.G. Hook Organ. On the right is a poster that was designed for this benefit concert by Wolf's Crag Graphics in Plymouth, Maine.

Congratulations to Josh and Sarah Jackson of Bucksport on the birth of their son, Jace Maverick Jackson. Jace was born on August 30 and weighed 8 lbs. and was 20 ¼ inches long. Big sister Sophie loves him lots and great-grandparents, John and Joanne Jackson are blessed to have him a part of their family.



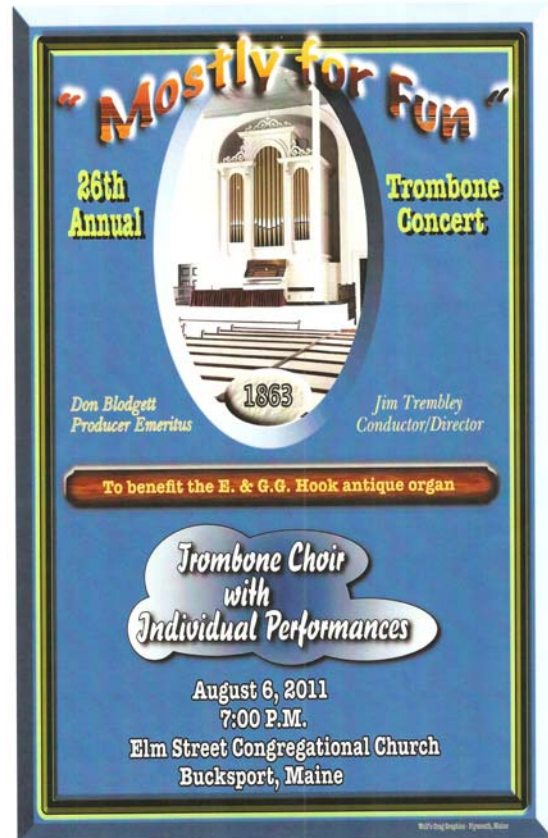
Congratulations to the following people who graduated from high school and college. These are people who attended our Sunday School program as children.

High School Graduates:

- Tyler McAllian: son of Dan & Marjorie McAllian
- Joseph Goodin: son of Bruce & Lynn Goodin
- James Potter: son of James & Wendy Potter

College Graduate:

- Arron Hughes: daughter of Louise Lowell



It's Picnic Time!



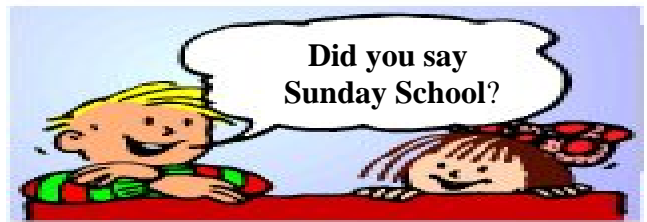
Rev. Linda and Dr. Richard Smith invited parishioners to attend a church picnic at their home on Saturday, August 20. The sun was out in full force and brightened everyone's spirits. The aroma of hamburgers on the grill and other delicacies was in the air. People gathered at tables inside the garage area to enjoy the meal. After the meal everyone gathered outside in the beautiful sunshine and chatted with one another. Thank you to Rev. Linda and Dick Smith for hosting a lovely picnic!



Yum

This word about sums it up. Can you envision the aroma of delicious lasagna being served right at your table and then biting into the soft noodles, hamburg and cheese mixture? Well, dream no more because you can actually taste this dish and many other dishes at the public supper that is going to be held on Saturday, October 8 at 5-6 p.m. in Brown Hall. This will be the last public supper of the 2011 year. So mark your calendars!

corner room. This wonderful ministry has been an outreach to the community and new members are encouraged to join the group. Even if you are unable to join the group each month you can still donate your knitting talents from home. For information, please contact Natalie McFarland at 469-3866. The next meeting is Tuesday, September 20 at 1:30 p.m.



S P O N S O R S H I P

The members of the Diaconate do not meet formally in the summer months. However, we remain busy with preparing the sanctuary for services on Sunday and participating in various church activities. We are going to sponsor a family in transitional housing, and will buy gifts for the children's birthdays and will do the same for Christmas if the need still exists. We are considering several other projects for the fall. More information will be forthcoming. Gerry Hamburger, church treasurer has provided us with excellent financial advice during the recent market upheaval so we avoided what might have been significant losses. We are grateful. The next Diaconate meeting will be on Sunday, September 25 at 11:15 a.m. in the corner room.



The Sunday School children will resume classes on Sunday, September 11. Children from pre-K through 8th grade are welcome to attend Sunday School. For more information, please contact Margie McAllian, Director of Children's and Youth Christian Education at 469-3743. On Sunday, September 11 the children will not be attending church because they will be helping to bake cookies for the local police and fire stations. This is an outreach project to help remember those who were victims of 9/11 and to thank our local stations for all the hard work they do.

The Sunday School children had a summer vacation. During the summer they were invited to a "fun" day at Matt and Michele Keene's camp. The children enjoyed swimming and many other activities along with a picnic lunch. Thank you goes to everyone who helped with this event!



The Joy of Knitting

The knitting group has been knitting prayer shawls and oncology hats for cancer patients. The group meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. in the

Margie McAllian and Michele Keene helped to organize a yard sale by the Sunday School to raise money for the building fund. The yard sale was held on two days in late August and netted a total of \$700.00. Thank you Margie and Michele!

Hear the music

“The Somerset Consort” group will be performing a concert in the sanctuary on Friday, September 16 at 7 p.m. Freewill donations will be accepted to benefit the church, which is on the National Historic Register. Consort members Diana Brown, flute, Lorna Russell, viola da gamba and Carlton Russell, organ will be joined by flutist Richard Sanner in a program of great Baroque music. The program will include organ transcriptions of music by Handel and flute sonatas and trio sonatas by German and English composers, including Quantz and Daniel Purcell. An flute duet by Carl Stamitz will add a dash of the Classical style.



Voters Needed

A congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, September 18 after the worship service.

This meeting is to vote on the revised mission statement, which reads as follows: **With God’s guidance and the teachings of Jesus Christ, we will work together in the spirit of love, friendship, and respect, to grow our church and its ministries to be spiritually, physically, and financially sustainable for the foreseeable future.** A number of critical issues will be discussed after reviewing the mission statement. Everyone is encouraged to attend this meeting.

"Listening Presence"



A new program for lay people has been developed in this area. This program is called “Listening Presence,” and is for lay people to become effective listeners for people who are sick, in crisis, at risk, lonely or underserved. Participants will take part in several different classes at St. Francis by the Sea in Blue Hill starting on Saturday, September 24. The program fee is \$80.00 to help cover materials and program expenses along with costs of the overnight retreat. Scholarships are available. Participants need to fill out a registration form and a clergy recommendation form. These forms are available in the church office. Both forms are due by September 19. Brochures are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary

Tai Chi Anyone?



Rev. Dr. Bruce Young will lead another six week study of Tai Chi. The first Tai Chi class was held in April and May 2011. It was very popular so Rev. Dr. Young has agreed to come back and teach Tai Chi again. The class is limited to fourteen people so that individual time may be given to those that can use it. The Tai Chi session will be starting on Thursday, September 29 at 6 p.m. in Brown Hall. Participants who have signed up have received registration forms. The session will go for six weeks. The class is now full, but if anyone is interested for future Tai Chi classes, just call the church office at 469-3333 to leave your name.

Thank You



As our Capital Campaign winds down, (can you believe that it has been three years?), the Committee wanted to show you what has been accomplished, thanks to your generosity.

We have to date:

1. Replaced the sanctuary roof.
2. Removed the old siding, insulated and re-sided the entire sanctuary.
3. Replaced the Sanctuary windows with double glazed vinyl, low E windows that will help keep the sanctuary warm in winter and cool in summer.
4. Rebuilt the damaged footings and sills under the West side of the sanctuary.
5. Rebuilt the columns in front of the church.
6. Replaced the furnace with a more efficient one.
7. Replaced brick walkway with granite, re-set steps and installed hand rails.
8. Installed new carpeting in the Narthex and down the stairs.

As you can see, it has been a busy and expensive two and a half years. Thanks to you, we have been able to restore our church and secure it for the next generation, hopefully for another 200 years.

We still have many projects on our “To Do” list and are addressing them as we have time and money. As you can imagine this is an ongoing project, there is no end, only opportunities. We assure you that we will be using any future bequests and donations to the Building Fund to pay for these items.

The pictures on the next page show some of our



accomplishments and we hope that you feel the same pride in our beautiful church that we feel. God bless you for your generosity and your continued support.



Neighbors In Need

The Neighbors in Need Offering will be taken on Sunday, October 2 during the worship service. An envelope will be provided in the bulletin the week before. This offering supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries.

Workshop Offered



Writing the Sacred: A Psalm-Writing workshop is being offered to everyone on Tuesday, October at the First Congregational Church of Ellsworth, UCC. The cost is \$15.00. The church is located at 2 Church Street in Ellsworth. To register or for more information call 945-3166. If there are those who would like to attend, please let Rev. Smith know and carpooling can be done.

Ray McGinnis is the author of *Writing the Sacred*, and he will lead the workshop. Everyone is original and has something important to express. As a veteran leader, Ray McGinnis brings a splendid range of writing exercises to spark your imagination. Come play with words. Come nurture your spirit as you learn ways to make your own new psalms. Explore how Psalm writing can deepen self-understanding, expand self-expression, personal and spiritual growth. You'll hear Psalms and discover some of the timeless lyrical and poetic forms of the ancient psalmists. Hear how St. Francis of Assisi, May Sarton, Mary Oliver and other writers across the ages have glimpsed the sacred in the ordinary through writing. Ray brings to this workshop simple step-by-step journal writing and

poetry exercises to help you write with ease. Signed copies of "**Writing the Sacred**" will be on sale for \$20.00.

Special Service



Rev. Linda Smith will lead an All Saint's remembrance service on Sunday, October 30 during the worship service. This service is done to remember those loved ones who have passed away during the year.



Thanksgiving Service

An ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Service will be held on Wednesday, November 23 at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. An ecumenical choir will gather to practice at 6 p.m. that evening. All are welcome to join the choir.

Newsletter Deadline



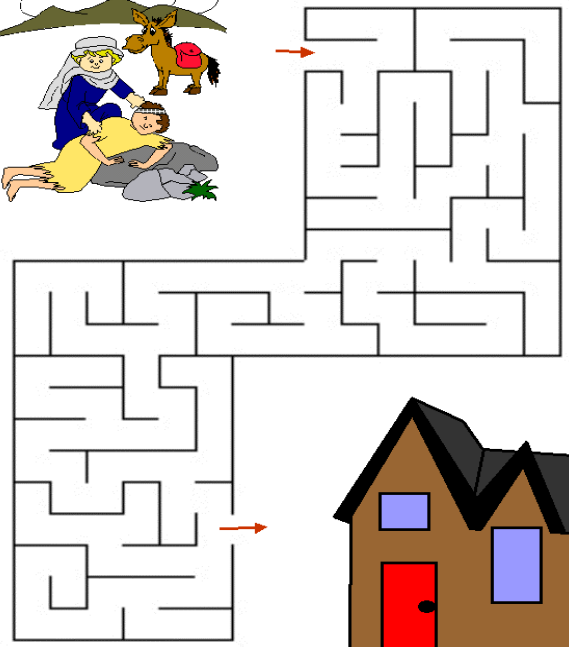
The deadline for the December, January and February newsletter is Tuesday, November 15. Please e-mail articles to the church office at ElmStCh@gmail.com.

Kids Zone



Good Samaritan Maze

Help the Samaritan find shelter for the hurt man.



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST SAYS

Thank You!

To the members of

Elm Street Congregational, Bucksport


United Church of Christ

For your 2010 contribution of

Four Thousand, Eight Hundred and Forty Dollars

For Basic Support of

Our Church's Wider Mission



Geoffrey A. Black

Geoffrey A. Black
General Minister and President,
United Church of Christ

David Gonski

Conference Minister



God is still speaking,

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Thank You.....

ELM STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

For Lovingly Creating

~ 120 School Kits ~

**Thank you for your part in helping to collect a total of
1,959 Kits at the**

Woodfords Congregational Church Kit Depot

Our deepest appreciation for your continued support of the Church World Service 2011 Kit Program!



Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County continually endeavors to work collaboratively with churches, schools, childcare providers, therapists, and health care agencies to provide support for individuals or families who have lost a loved one. We also offer Bereavement Training for people who feel called to become bereavement volunteer and learn how to support the bereaved (see enclosed flier for details).

- **Widow & Widowers** - Bring Bag Lunch - (10-Weeks)
Fridays, October 7 – December 16, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
(will not meet on Nov. 11th - Veterans Day)
- **Parents Who Have Lost a Teen or Adult Children** - (7-Weeks)
Fridays, September 23 - November 4, 2:00 – 3:30 p. m.
- **Adults Who Have Lost a Parent or Sibling** - (7-Weeks)
Thursdays, October 6 - November 17, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.
- **Survivors of Loved Ones Who Have Committed Suicide** - (6-Weeks)
Mondays, October 17 - November 21, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.


The support groups and bereavement training is held at the hospice house. We hope you will help publicize the enclosed information on your community bulletin board and monthly newsletter. We encourage you to make copies of the information and distribute them to individuals or families who would benefit from attending a support group or from taking the bereavement training. Pre-registration and interview is required. Together, we can make a difference.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the office, 667-2531.

~ September 2011 ~

◀ August

October ▶

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 Cathy Hamburger leads service	5 	6	7 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	8	9	10 Public Supper @ 5-6 p.m.
11 Sunday School Starts Home Communion @ 11:15 a.m.	12 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	13	14 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	15	16 Somerset Consort Concert @ 7 p.m.	17
18 Congregational Meeting after Service	19 Women's Group @ 5 p.m. Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	20 Knitters @ 1:30 p.m.	21 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	22	23	24
25 Diaconate @ 11:15 a.m.	26 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	27	28 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	29 Tai Chi @ 6 p.m.	30	Notes: Head Ushers: Karen Harrison Ralph Jewett

~ October 2011 ~

◀ September

November ▶

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 NIN Offering Home Communion @ 11:15 a.m.	3 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	4	5 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	6 Tai Chi @ 6 p.m.	7	8 Public Supper @ 5-6 p.m.
9 Diaconate @ 11:15 a.m.	10 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	11	12 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	13 No Tai Chi	14	15
16 Children's Sabbath Sunday	17 Women's Group @ 5 p.m. Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	18 Knitters @ 1:30 p.m.	19 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	20 Tai Chi @ 6 p.m.	21	22
23	24 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	25	26 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	27 Tai Chi @ 6 p.m.	28	29
30 No Sunday School All Saint's Service	31 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	Notes: NIN: Neighbors In Need Offering Head Ushers: Irene Atwood & Linda White				

~ November 2011 ~

◀ October

December ▶

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 All Saint's Day	2 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	3 Tai Chi @ 6 p.m.	4	5
6 Home Communion @ 11:15 a.m.	7 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	8	9 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	10 Tai Chi @ 6 p.m. Veteran's Day	11	12
13 Diaconate @ 11:15 a.m.	14 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	15 Newsletter Deadline	16 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	17	18	19
20 Trustees @ 11:15 a.m. Thanksgiving Sunday	21 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m. Women's Group @ 5 p.m.	22 Knitters @ 1:30 p.m.	23 Thanksgiving Eve Service @ 7 p.m. AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	24 Thanksgiving Day Church Office Closed	25	26
27	28 Cub Scouts @ 5:30 p.m.	29	30 AA @ 7 p.m. Al-Anon @ 7 p.m.	Notes: An ecumenical choir will sing during the Thanksgiving Eve service on November 23. All are welcome to join the practice at 6 p.m. that evening. Head Ushers: Ann McCann & Esther Landry		